Anastasia Club

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Lot.16

HELP ME FIND THE
"ICON OF THE VIRGIN"
HIDDEN SOMEWHERE
IN RUSSIA.

RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
THIS IS—
THE REAL FOLDABLE ICON?
BE CAREFUL
THERE'S URANIUM IN IT.
THERE'S A SCRATCH MARK MADE WITH A KNIFE
THAT WE COULDN'T SEE IN THE PICTURE
RIGHT HERE...

RUMBLE
MAYBE IT WAS DAMAGED WHEN IT WAS TAKEN OUT OF THE GRAVE.
THE PROPRIETOR WAS "ANNA VYRUBOVA." RIGHT?
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
YEP.
SHE GOT HOLD OF THE "ICON OF THE VIRGIN" AFTER THE REVOLUTION.
WASN'T VYRUBOVA THE ONE THAT ORDERED THIS AND SENT IT TO RASPUTIN?
YEP.
SHE WAS THE LEAD ATTENDANT FOR QUEEN ALEXANDRA, RIGHT?
I THOUGHT SHE STAYED LOYAL TIL THE END AND DIED WITH THE QUEEN.
YEAH.
THE OFFICIALS IN THE ROYAL PALACE WERE MOSTLY CAPTURED AND BRUTALLY MURDERED,
BUT VYRUBOVA WAS THOUGHT OF AS A DANGEROUS PERSON WHO HAD AS MUCH INFLUENTIAL POWER AS RASPUTIN.
SO RIGHT AFTER THE REVOLUTION, SHE WAS ARRESTED AS A POLITICAL OFFENDER AND TAKEN AWAY FROM THE IMPERIAL FAMILY— WHICH TURNED OUT TO BE A BLESSING.

THERE'S INFORMATION THAT SOME OF THE ARTIFACTS RELATED TO THE ROMANOV FAMILY HAVE BEEN RETURNED TO RUSSIA
SO SHE WAS DEEMED INNOCENT, ESCAPED TO FINLAND, AND DIED IN 1964 AT THE AGE OF EIGHTY
VYRUBOVA WAS JUST A DEEPLY RELIGIOUS, SOFT-HEARTED WOMAN
WHAT MAKES YOU THINK IT'S THERE?
YEP.
SO THAT'S WHY WE'RE HEADING TO YEKATERINBURG ON THIS TRAIN
EITHER YEKATERINBURG OR POKROVSKOYE!
THAT'S THE PROBLEM, ISN'T IT?
WHERE IN RUSSIA?
IF THERE WAS A MEMORIAL OF THEM, IT WOULD BE IN ONE OF THESE PLACES...
KAMUI DOESN'T THINK IT'S IN POKROVSKOYE
RASPUTIN'S CORPSE WAS DUG UP AND BURNED A WEEK AFTER THE REVOLUTION
POKROVSKOYE WAS THE BIRTHPLACE OF RASPUTIN, WHO WAS EVEN WORSHIPPED AS A GOD
YEKATERINBURG WAS EVERYTHING TO HER. IT'S THE PLACE THAT THE IMPERIAL FAMILY WAS KILLED

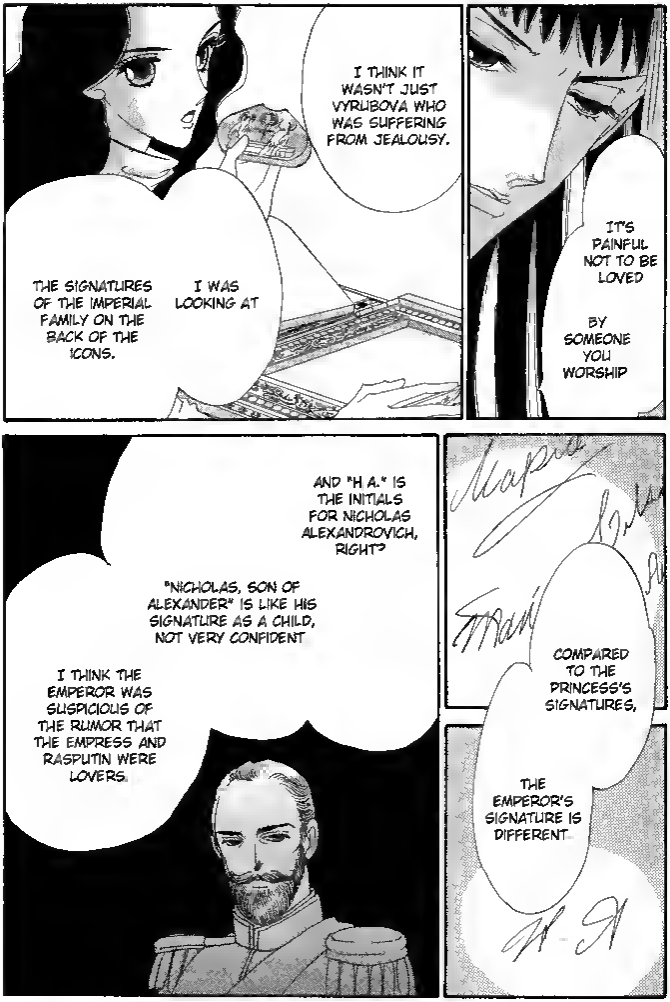
IF VYRUBOVA WAS
THE JUDAS THAT BETRAYED RASPUTIN...
AS A WOMAN WHO LOVED HIM
TO THE POINT THAT SHE HATED HIM,

VYRUBOVA SEEMED JUST LIKE A REGULAR FAN.
THEY COULDN'T HAVE KNOWN THAT THERE WAS URANIUM IN IT WITH THEIR SCIENCE.
An interesting theory
MIGHT SHE HAVE SENT THE ICON TO KILL HIM?

THERE WERE EVEN RUMORS THAT SHE WAS EMPEROR NICHOLAS'S LOVER,
BUT WHEN SHE WAS ARRESTED AT AGE 33, THEY EXAMINED HER BODY AND SHE WAS A VIRGIN.
THE EMPRESS RECOMMENDED HER TO A MARRIAGE, BUT SHE DIVORCED THE MAN AFTER A YEAR
AND THEY WERE TOGETHER SO MUCH THAT THERE WERE RUMORS OF THEM BEING LESBIANS
VYRUBOVA BECAME A FAVORITE OF THE EMPRESS AT AGE TWENTY,

YEAH— I GET IT.
SO SHE'S LIKE THE PRESIDENT OF A "ROCK ARTIST FANCLUB," RIGHT?
NICE, SEIRA-SAN!
GLARE
A "PREJUDICED CLEAN-FREAK"...
THERE SEEMS TO BE A LOT OF THEM AROUND, DOESN'T IT?
RASPUTIN WAS A CHARISMATIC SUPERSTAR,
AND ANNA VYRUBOVA WAS OBSESSED WITH HIS PASSIONATE VOICE AND HEART
BUT WHEN HE LEFT THE STAGE,
HE WAS SURROUNDED BY GROUPIES.
BUT THE PRESIDENT DIDN'T MAKE A MOVE, PERHAPS OUT OF RESPECT.
SHE JUST WATCHED HIM HAVE HIS LOVE AFFAIRS.
AND THEN WHEN SHE INTRODUCED HIM TO THE EMPRESS, WHOM SHE WORSHIPPED, THEY IMMEDIATELY BECAME CLOSE FRIENDS...

THE DIRTY SUPERSTAR IS THE EXACT OPPOSITE OF THE CLEAN VYRUBOVA.
BUT IN FRONT OF THE EMPRESS, HE KNEELS AND DEVOTES HIS LIFE TO HER.
YET SHE CAN'T STOP LOVING HIM.
VYRUBOVA'S FEELINGS GROW DEEPER AS HER LOVE IS UNANSWERED,
AND FINALLY TURN INTO HATRED.
IT'S JUST HOW I IMAGINE IT
KAMUI-CHAN, YOU'RE LIKE A LOVE EXPERT.
IS IT THE SAME FOR PRINCE YUSUPOV?
DON'T PUT THOSE TWO TOGETHER, THAT'S RUDE TO ANNA
That man cut off Rasputin's privates
I UNDER-STAND HER FEELINGS...


I THINK IT WASN'T JUST VYRUBOVA WHO WAS SUFFERING FROM JEALOUSY.
I WAS LOOKING AT THE SIGNATURES OF THE IMPERIAL FAMILY ON THE BACK OF THE ICONS.
IT'S PAINFUL NOT TO BE LOVED BY SOMEONE YOU WORSHIP
AND "H A." IS THE INITIALS FOR NICHOLAS ALEXANDROVICH, RIGHT?
"NICHOLAS, SON OF ALEXANDER" IS LIKE HIS SIGNATURE AS A CHILD, NOT VERY CONFIDENT
I THINK THE EMPEROR WAS SUSPICIOUS OF THE RUMOR THAT THE EMPRESS AND RASPUTIN WERE LOVERS.
COMPARED TO THE PRINCESS'S SIGNATURES,
THE EMPEROR'S SIGNATURE IS DIFFERENT.

ARE YOU DONE?
HM?
BUT ANNA AND THE EMPRESS WERE OBSESSING OVER RASPUTIN...
MEN WHO AREN'T CONFIDENT WANT TO BE THE ONLY "GOD" IN THE EYES OF THEIR WIVES.
IT'S POSSIBLE.
YEP
KAMUI WOULD WORRY OTHERWISE, RIGHT?
...YEAH
WE SHOULD KEEP IT IN THIS
IT'S NOT THAT HARMFUL AS LONG AS YOU'RE JUST HOLDING IT,
BUT IT'S NOT COMPLETELY HARMLESS
DID YOU HAVE THAT SUITCASE SPECIALLY MADE?
MOVE OVER.

SUMI-KUN DOESN'T LOOK GOOD
HE'S FINE, HE'S FINE
IT'S JUST AN AFTEREFFECT OF BEING POSSESSED BY RASPUTIN
Teehee
KAMUI-CHAN, WEREN'T YOU GOOD AT OBSERVING?
RATTLE
RATTLE
Sigh.
SUMI-KUN, DOES YOUR HEAD HURT?
HERE!
I HAVE MOTION SICKNESS MEDICINE.
IT'S MY HEART THAT HURTS.

WHAT'S BIG IS
IT TAKES A WEEK TO RIDE THE TRANS-SIBERIAN RAILWAY FROM END TO END, RIGHT?
NO WONDER, RUSSIA'S SO BIG—
grab
IT'S NOT A GAME!
WHAT RHYMES WITH "LOVE" ...
"LOVE"
MY LOVE
FOR KAMUI-CHAN

I LOVE YOU,
RATTLE
KAMUI!!
RATTLE
RATTLE
THEN YOU KNOW NOW.
LOVE ME, KAMUI-KUN!!
I'LL TAKE CARE OF YOU BETTER THAN THAT IDIOT EVER CAN!
S SUMI-KUN
...I DIDN'T KNOW
Sigh

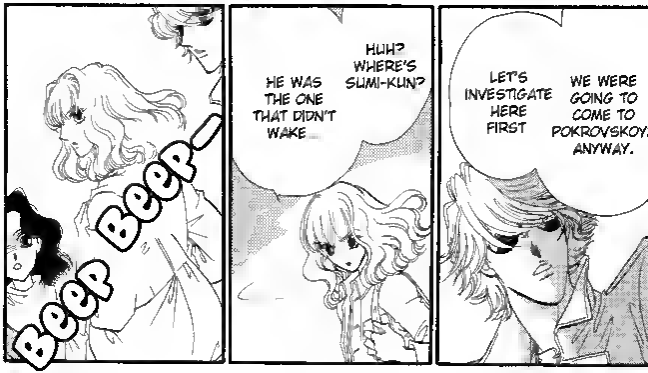
I..
DON'T WANT TO BE TAKEN CARE OF
I
I SAW AT THE HERMITAGE
AND I ONLY WANT TO KISS SENA.
AND I'VE ALREADY KISSED SENA A FEW TIMES

HOW MANY MORE HOURS UNTIL WE REACH YEKATERINBURG?
UHH— ABOUT EIGHT HOURS.
SUMI-KUN?
I
FINE.
IT'S STILL LIGHT OUT BECAUSE OF THE ARCTIC NIGHT.
BUT IT'S ALREADY NIGHT—
SHOULD WE SLEEP?
I'LL STAY AWAKE, SO SLEEP
I'LL WAKE YOU UP WHEN WE GET THERE
THANKS
SUMI-KUN—

I HOPE HE'S FINE...
Chatter
Chatter
I FELL ASLEEP AND MISSED IT
WAKE UP

ПОКРОВСКОЕ
THE PLACE WHERE RASPUTIN WAS BORN—
THIS ISN'T YEKATERINBURG AT ALL...
IT'S POKROVSKOYE!

THE TRAIN BACK TO YEKATERINBURG WON'T COME UNTIL TWO HOURS.
WHAT SHOULD WE DO?
IT CAN'T BE A COINCIDENCE...

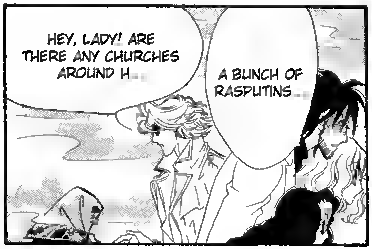

Beep Beep—
HE WAS THE ONE THAT DIDN'T WAKE...
HUH? WHERE'S SUMI-KUN?
LET'S INVESTIGATE HERE FIRST
WE WERE GOING TO COME TO POKROVSKOYE ANYWAY.

I GOT US A TAXI.
TELL HIM IN RUSSIAN
THAT WE WANT TO GO TO THE VILLAGE RASPUTIN WAS BORN.
rrr
rumble
IT'S FURTHER IN THE URAL MOUNTAINS...!!
NOT A LOT OF RASPUTIN FANS COME HERE.
I KNOW A PLACE CALLED RASPUTJE, THOUGH.
IS— IS IT IN THE MOUNTAINS?
Watch the road!

RASPUTJE
VROOOM
BYE
ARE THERE HOUSES AROUND HERE?
THE MIST IS TOO THICK...
IT MEANS "CROSS-ROADS."
IT'S REALLY JUST A CROSSROAD.
SUMI-KUN?
THIS WAY.
WE'LL HAVE TO ASK THE LOCALS.
IT'S LIKE HE KNOWS THE WAY.
WHAT'S WITH HIM?

LOOK, I THINK IT'S A VILLAGE!
RASPUTIN'S VILLAGE?
DOES THE NAME "RASPUTIN" COME FROM THE WORD "CROSSROADS"?
THERE'S A THEORY
THAT HIS NAME COMES FROM THE WORD "RASPUTISTOVA" MEANING LUST.
WHOA—
THAT'S LIKE HIM—
RASPUTIN'S INTERPRETATION OF THE DOCTRINE SAYS TO REPENT FOR YOUR SINS AND YOU'LL BE SAVED
THERE WAS A SECTION THAT SAID "COMMIT SINS FIRST," MEANING PROMISCUITY IS OKAY, RIGHT?
THEN HE'S DONE IT LOTS OF TIMES AT HIS HOME TOW...
FOOL!!

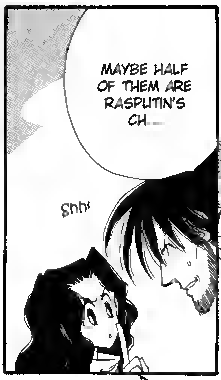
SOMEONE'S COMING!!
OKAY.
Seriously, what's happened to you, Sumi kun?
OH...
THAT'S A MADE-UP STORY TO SLANDER RASPUTIN!
I
R...R... RASPUTIN?
...AAH!


HEY, LADY! ARE THERE ANY CHURCHES AROUND H...
A BUNCH OF RASPUTINS...

rattle
rattle
rattle

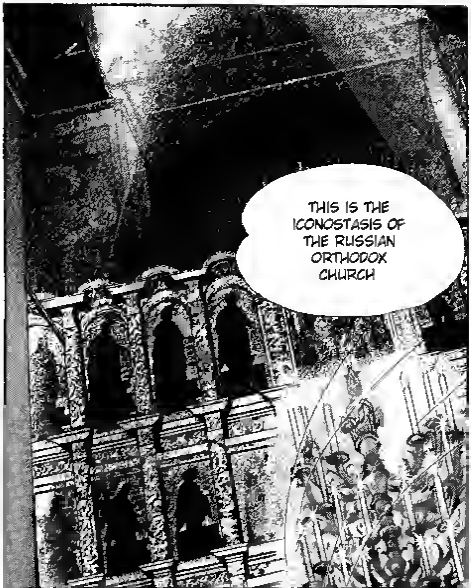
TAKUTO... THIS MAN SAYS HE'LL GUIDE US

WHO ARE YOU? YOU'RE NOT FROM AROUND HERE


MAYBE HALF OF THEM ARE RASPUTIN'S CH...
sigh

NICE TO MEET YOU.
MR. RASPUTIN, A STARETS.
HALF THE PEOPLE IN THE VILLAGE HAVE THE LAST NAME "RASPUTIN."

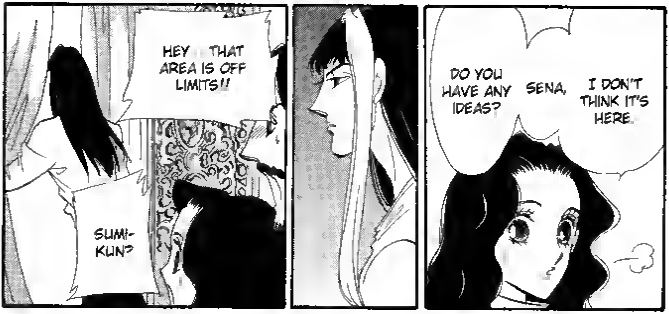
THIS IS A CHURCH THAT OUR FATHERS' GENERATION ERECTED
ON THE RUINS OF GRIGORI RASPUTIN'S UNDERGROUND CHURCH, IN REMEMBRANCE OF HIM


THIS IS THE ICONOSTASIS OF THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

PLEASE, COME IN
WHOA...
SO MANY ICONS!!

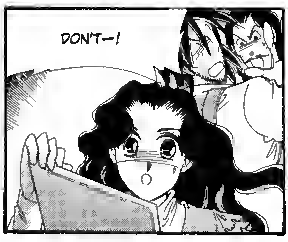
THE INSIDE IS BEAUTIFUL
WHERE IS...
THE ICON OF THE VIRGIN?
...IT'S NOT HERE!!

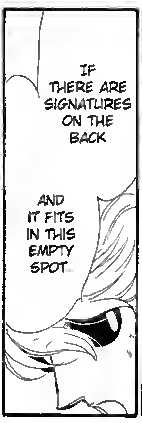
DO YOU KNOW OF THE ICON OF THE VIRGIN DONATED BY ANNA VYRUBOVA?
...I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU ARE TALKING ABOUT.
AS I THOUGHT...

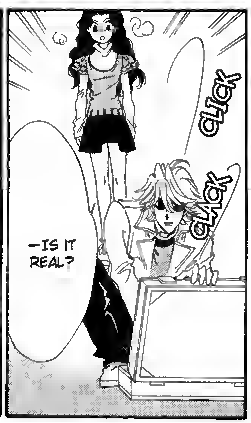

DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEAS?
SENA,
I DON'T THINK IT'S HERE...
HEY... THAT AREA IS OFF LIMITS!!
SUMI-KUN?

THERE'S A ROOM OVER HERE?
ONLY CLERGYMEN CAN ENTER THAT ROOM!!
fwish
WHAT!?
THAT'S—

"THE ICON OF THE VIRGIN"...?

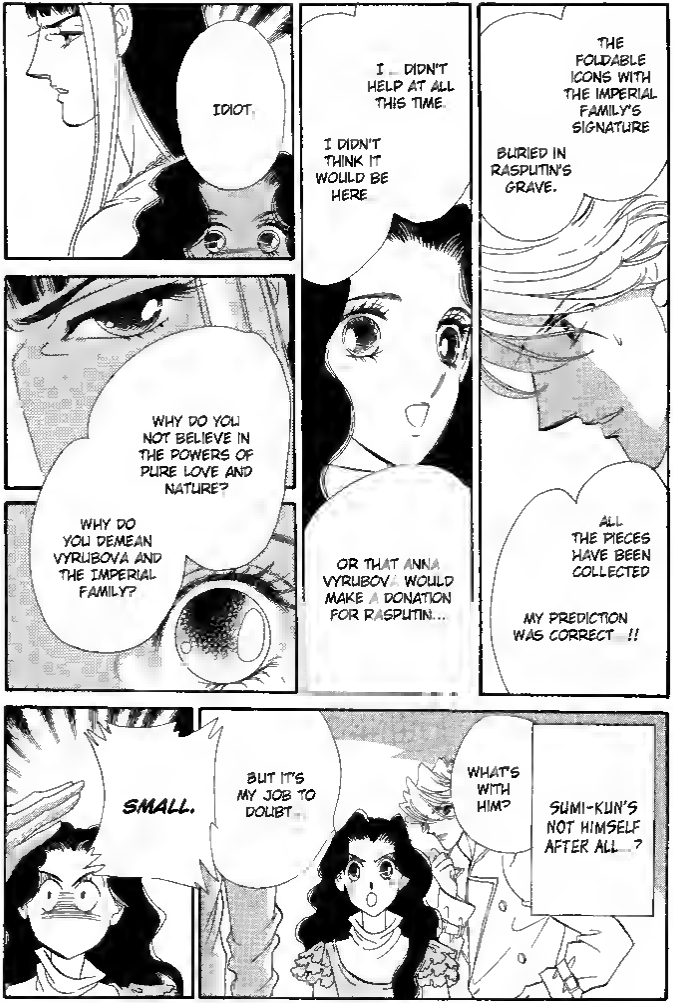

DON'T--!


IF THERE ARE SIGNATURES ON THE BACK
AND IT FITS IN THIS EMPTY SPOT


CLICK
CLICK
--IS IT REAL?

THEIR SIGNATURES ARE ON THE BACK!!

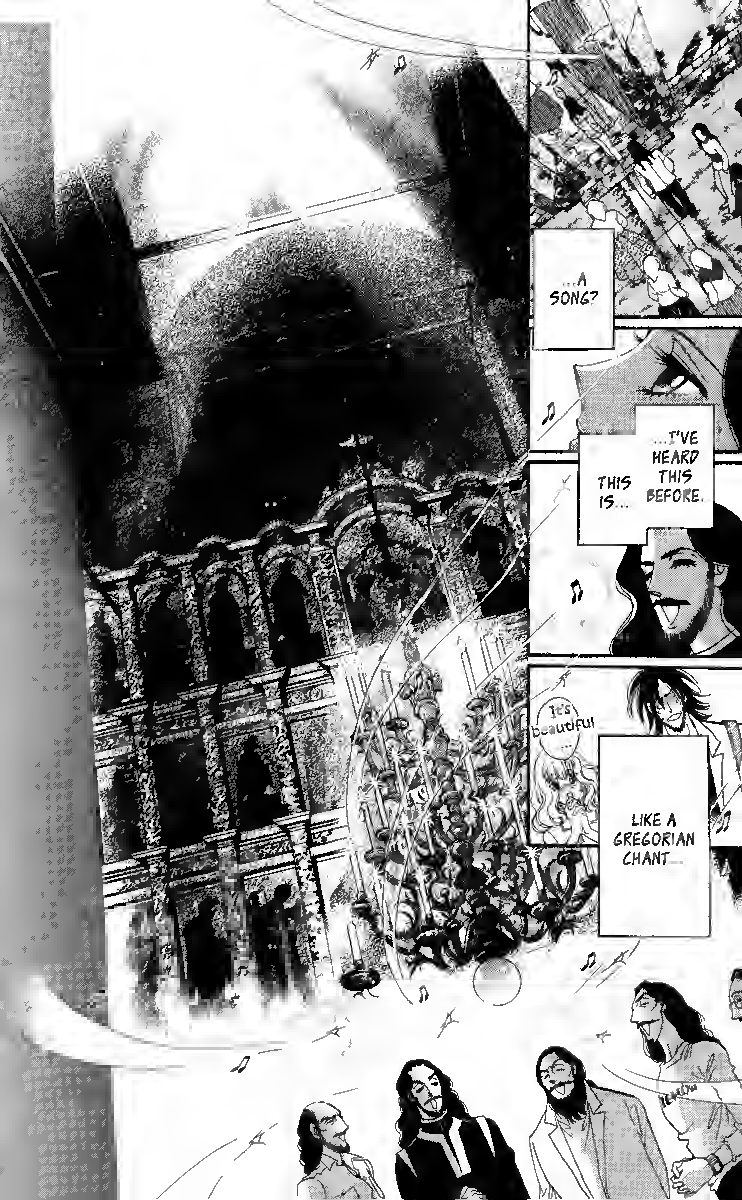
YES...!!
OH MY!! THERE WAS SUCH A WONDERFUL BONUS TO THE "VIRGIN" THAT MS. VYRUBOVA SENT US...
Whoaaa!
CONGRATULATIONS, SENA...
What's up with him?
He's gone.
THIS IS AMAZING! WE MUST CELEBRATE! I WILL TELL EVERYONE!!


IDIOT.
I... DIDN'T HELP AT ALL THIS TIME.
I DIDN'T THINK IT WOULD BE HERE.
THE FOLDABLE ICONS WITH THE IMPERIAL FAMILY'S SIGNATURE BURIED IN RASPUTIN'S GRAVE.
WHY DO YOU NOT BELIEVE IN THE POWERS OF PURE LOVE AND NATURE?
WHY DO YOU DEMEAN VYRUBOVA AND THE IMPERIAL FAMILY?
OR THAT ANNA VYRUBOVA WOULD MAKE A DONATION FOR RASPUTIN...
ALL THE PIECES HAVE BEEN COLLECTED
MY PREDICTION WAS CORRECT !!
SMALL.
BUT IT'S MY JOB TO DOUBT...
WHAT'S WITH HIM?
SUMI-KUN'S NOT HIMSELF AFTER ALL...?

I HATE THE WORD "SM
SMALL ONE,
OPEN YOUR EYES!
BEHOLD THE THINGS BEFORE YOUR EYES CAREFULLY!
BEHOLD!
BEHOLD!
THE ICON!

PLEASE REMEMBER THE EMPRESS AND THE PRINCE AND PRAY FOR THEM
STARETS, PLEASE ACCEPT THIS ICON.
MY MOST IMPORTANT... THE POOR NOBLE MOTHER AND CHILD THAT HAVE BEEN STRICKEN BY MISFORTUNE
THIS STARETS IS MERELY A VULGAR, UNLEARNED MUZHIK FROM SIBERIA
BUT I HAVE BEEN GIVEN LIFE BY RUSSIA AND LOVE OUR PAPA, THE EMPEROR, SAME AS YOU
STARETS, YOU ARE THIS BLACK STONE THAT FELL FROM HEAVEN
YOU OPEN A GREAT HOLE IN THE EARTH, BUT THAT IS THE WILL OF GOD.
ANNA
YOU WILL LIVE A LONG FULFILLING LIFE
MAY YOU BE BLESSED, AND SOOTHE OTHERS

"THE VIRGIN"...
SYMBOLIZES THE EMPRESS ALEXANDRA AND PRINCE ALEXEI!!
REALLY? THEN IT'S EVEN MORE VALUABLE...
GREEDY FOOL!
!?
SE...EIZE
WHAT? I CAN'T... MOVE


...A SONG?
THIS IS...
...I'VE HEARD THIS BEFORE.
It's beautiful...
LIKE A GREGORIAN CHANT—

I...
I
FEEL THAT I SHALL LEAVE LIFE BEFORE JANUARY 1ST
IF I AM KILLED BY COMMON ASSASSINS,
AND ESPECIALLY BY MY BROTHERS THE RUSSIAN PEASANTS,
YOU, TSAR OF RUSSIA,
HAVE NOTHING TO FEAR
YOU WILL REMAIN ON YOUR THRONE AND GOVERN,
AND YOUR CHILDREN WILL REIGN FOR HUNDREDS OF YEARS IN RUSSIA
IS THIS...
THE LETTER RASPUTIN WROTE A FEW DAYS BEFORE HE WAS KILLED...?
H... HUH?

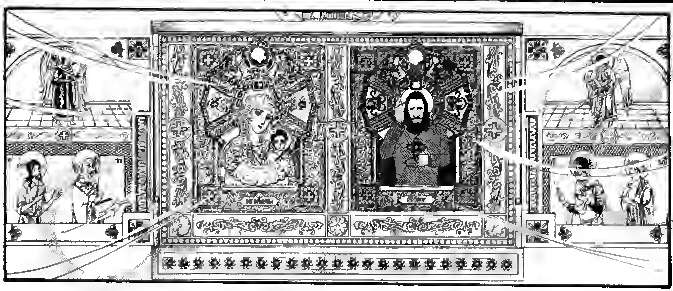
...SUMI-KUN IS
LOOKING MORE AND MORE LIKE RASPUTIN.
BUT IF I AM MURDERED BY NOBLES,
THEIR HANDS WILL REMAIN SOILED WITH MY BLOOD, AND THEY WILL LEAVE RUSSIA
BROTHERS WILL KILL EACH OTHER AND HATE EACH OTHER,
AND FOR 25 YEARS THERE WILL BE NO NOBLES IN THE COUNTRY.
TSAR OF THE LAND OF RUSSIA,
WHEN YOU HEAR THE SOUND OF THE BELL WHICH ANNOUNCES MY DEATH,
YOU MUST KNOW THIS.
IF THE ONES WHO HAVE WROUGHT MY DEATH
ARE YOUR RELATIONS—

THEN NONE OF YOUR FAMILY AND RELATIONS
WILL REMAIN ALIVE FOR MORE THAN TWO YEARS
THEY—
WILL BE KILLED BY THE PEOPLE OF RUSSIA
BELOVED FATHER OF RUSSIA— TSAR—
IT IS MY DUTY TO INFORM YOU OF THIS DREADFUL PROPHECY,
AS THE MUZHIK THAT HAS BEEN GIVEN POWER BY THE BLACK STONE FROM HEAVEN
I ASK FOR FORGIVENESS!
PLEASE ACT WITH CAUTION!
I BEG OF YOU!!
TELL YOUR FAMILY THAT I HAVE COMPENSATED WITH MY LIFE

I AM NO LONGER AMONG THE LIVING
PRAY...
PRAY!!
BE STRONG
CHERISH YOUR BLESSED FAMILY...
GRIGORI ..

I UNDERSTOOD AFTER ALL THE PIECES HAD BEEN COLLECTED,
THAT IT WASN'T JUST A SCRATCH.
"H II"...
"NICHOLAS THE 2ND."
I COULD NOT... SAVE...
—
fsh..
wham!
THIS IS...
THE DECISIVE SIGNATURE OF NICHOLAS II
WHEN HE FINALLY BECAME THE REAL EMPEROR—
WITH MY POWERS, THAT WAS ALL I COULD DO...

...KAMUI-CHAN,
I SAW IT, TOO.



WHY DOES MY HEAD
HURT SO MUCH—?
UGH~

ARE YOU OKAY, SUMI-KUN?
I HAVE STOMACH MEDICINE IF YOU WANT SOME.
I'LL TAKE IT...
—I DON'T UNDER-STAND!!
WHY DID YOU GIVE THE CHURCH THE WHOLE ICON SET!?
IT'S REAL, RIGHT?
IT'S VALUABLE, RIGHT?
IT'S NOT LIKE YOU TWO...
I ONLY LENT IT TO THEM FOR 25 YEARS
AND I TOLD THEM THAT THEY NEED TO BE CAREFUL WHERE THEY STORE IT
OR DISPLAY IT...
BUT—!!
IT'S LIKE A SECURE SAFE! IF WE NEED IT, WE CAN COME BACK TO IT.
TO THIS "CROSSROAD" ...

IT'S NOT HERE!
THE ROAD WE CAME FROM, AND THE SIGN
IS THIS THE "CROSSROAD" BETWEEN WORLDS?

Anastasia Club